

I am honored to know her and to have worked with her. I would like to thank Senator DOLE for her contributions to the Senate and to the country we both love. I wish her and her family the best in all of their future endeavors.

JOHN E. SUNUNU

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I wish to join my fellow Senators to honor a colleague and a friend, Senator JOHN E. SUNUNU, who is departing the Senate at the close of this Congress. I have enjoyed working with Senator SUNUNU over the years—first in the House of Representatives and later in the Senate.

While in the Senate, I have had the great fortune of serving with JOHN on the Senate Finance Committee. He is a revered advocate of fiscal discipline, personal responsibility, and free markets. The two of us have stood together on numerous issues—most notably tax—and I have always believed that we could accomplish any goal because I had his voice of conviction and intellect by my side.

Representing New Hampshire, Senator SUNUNU has proven to all Granite Staters that he will fight for the simple motto that reads on their State license plate: Live Free or Die. Whether the item of the day was social security, trade, or any other topical issue, including the original intent of the Constitution, Senator SUNUNU has proven that he is up for any debate.

The U.S. Senate will not be the same without Senator JOHN SUNUNU. In a time when many politicians try to increase the role of government in American life, Senator JOHN SUNUNU has always bet on the American people rather than government. I will miss JOHN SUNUNU.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, four of our most valuable Senators will not return next year and we will miss them.

ELIZABETH DOLE

ELIZABETH DOLE began her career in public service at about the same time I did. We were both in the Nixon White House in 1969, and since then I have enjoyed following and watching and occasionally bumping into her remarkable career. She began that career at a time when women, even if they graduated from Harvard Law School as she did, had very few options. ELIZABETH made her options—in the Cabinet, heading the American Red Cross and pioneering in a Presidential race in 1999. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with her, as well as knowing even better Bob Dole during these last 6 years. She truly is one of America's most admired women.

GORDON SMITH

GORDON SMITH is the most eloquent among us Senators. Every Republican Senator would say that, and any Democrat who had heard him would agree. He has a quiet way, an intelligence and a way of speaking that commands attention and respect. He has his feet

firmly planted on the ground in Pendleton, OR. He understands the private sector. He has been courageous in his willingness to support and chide and criticize his party when needed. He will be sorely missed.

JOHN SUNUNU

I met JOHN SUNUNU when he was a college student and his father and I were Governors of our respective States. He arrives and leaves as the youngest member of the Senate. But, in our caucus, his voice is one of the voices most carefully listened to. His intelligence, his philosophical integrity and his persistence have made him a most valuable player in our Republican Conference. He has a bright career ahead of him.

TED STEVENS

I have often thought that I should write a book called "some things you don't know about the people I work with." Someday I will. And I will start with TED STEVENS, who flew the first cargo plane into Peking, as it was then called, at the end of World War II. This was a dangerous, bold mission. It helps to explain the life of this remarkable man who helped Alaska become a State and then has defended and supported it in the Senate for 40 years. With the departures of TED STEVENS and two other Senators of whom I have already spoken—PETE DOMENICI and JOHN WARNER—the Senate loses more than 100 years of service. More than that, this country loses three men whose view of America was rooted in the last years of World War II and the remarkable ascendancy of our country since then. Looking around the Senate, it will be difficult to find many among those of us who remain with the breadth of vision and old-fashioned patriotism that these men have contributed.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CAPTAIN ROBERT YLLESCAS

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, I wish to express my sympathy over the loss of U.S. Army captain Robert Yllescas. Captain Yllescas, a native Guatemalan and graduate of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, died on December 1 from injuries he sustained from an improvised explosive device in the mountains of Afghanistan on October 28. He was 31 years old.

After spending the first 18 years of his life in Guatemala, Captain Yllescas moved to Nebraska, where he enrolled in the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and joined the ROTC. He married his wife Dena in her hometown of Osceola, NE. A graduate of Army Ranger school, Captain Yllescas' service included two tours of duty in Iraq and one in Afghanistan, where he proved to be an exemplary leader. As the commander of B Troop, 6-4 Cavalry of the 3rd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, he led 90 U.S. and 200 Afghan soldiers in Nuristan province. He was awarded the Purple Heart by President Bush on November 10.

All of Nebraska is proud of Captain Yllescas' service to our country, as

well as the thousands of brave men and women serving in the U.S. Armed Forces.

Captain Yllescas is remembered as a devoted husband, father, and son. In addition to his wife Dena, he is survived by his daughters, Julia, 7, and Eva, 10 months; and parents Otto and Barb.

I ask my colleagues to join me and all Americans in honoring U.S. Army CPT Robert Yllescas.

67TH ANNIVERSARY OF PEARL HARBOR

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, yesterday, December 7, 2008, was the 67th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor in which more than 2,400 courageous sailors, soldiers, and marines died. To those in Hawaii who, like me, witnessed the attack, the events of 67 years ago have a deep personal significance. I will never forget the courage and commitment of the soldiers, sailors, and ordinary men and women who did not hesitate to defend our Nation despite the enormous personal risk. For all Americans, young and old, it is important to remember that out of this dark hour arose the courage and strength of a unified Nation. I honor the memories of all the survivors of the attack as well as the fallen heroes who fought to defend our Nation's principles of democracy and freedom that day.

This year, with so many of our troops serving overseas, I would also like recognize our armed services families by honoring the sacrifices of those who lost loved ones during the attack on Pearl Harbor. Our Nation owes these family members a debt of gratitude for their strength and perseverance during such a grievous time. I want to thank all the members of our armed forces—those that served in World War II, all those that have served since, and those who still serve today. Your daily sacrifices protect and strengthen our country and allow us to enjoy the freedoms symbolic of the United States. Your courageous and dedicated efforts humble me, and may God bless you and your families as together we remember Pearl Harbor.

TRIBUTE TO LINDA LE

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the outstanding service Linda Le provided to the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship over the past 4 years. Linda is a dedicated individual whose penchant for critical insights and creative solutions will be sorely missed.

Linda first joined the Senate Small Business Committee staff in 2004 as a staff assistant. She had previously gained invaluable experience on financial matters during her career at Fidelity Investments. Through hard work and determination here in the Senate, Linda rose through the ranks, first as a research analyst and finally as a professional staff member. Over the years,